

NCBD News

NCBD Sponsor Update

2004 Submission Deadline Approaching

The July 1 data submission deadline is rapidly approaching. All CAHPS 3.0 or 3.0H health plan survey data – including Commercial, Medicaid and SCHIP populations – are due to NCBD on or before **July 1, 2004**. All data submission information and materials are available for download from our Web site at <http://ncbd.cahps.org/Submissions/Submissions.asp#>.

Sponsor report distribution dates remain consistent with previous years:

Product	Release Date
Commercial Sponsor Reports	September 15
Medicaid Sponsor Reports	October 15
NCBD Chartbook	October 15
SCHIP Sponsor Reports	November 15
NCBD Research Files	December 15

Any questions about data submission should be directed to Janice Ricketts at 301-517-4106 or by e-mail to NCBD1@westat.com. We look forward to your participation in NCBD 2004!

SUN Newsletter Debuts

The CAHPS® Connection (<http://www.cahps-sun.org/WhatsNew/CAHPSConnection20040422.htm>) is a new periodic newsletter for the users of CAHPS products and survey results. Its purpose is to inform users about new CAHPS products, the product development work of the CAHPS Consortium, and various tools and resources that may be useful such as workshops and educational materials. If you would like to

be added to the mailing list, please contact the CAHPS Survey Users Network (SUN) at cahps1@westat.com.

CAHPS User Group Meeting Scheduled for December 2 – 3, 2004

Mark your calendars for the 9th CAHPS User Group Meeting December 2-3, 2004 at the Waterfront Marriott in Baltimore, Maryland. At the meeting you'll have the chance to:

- hear about new CAHPS products and resources
- learn how to use survey results to improve quality of care
- learn how to use survey results to educate consumers and patients
- better understand how changes to existing surveys may affect your organization.

This meeting is a great opportunity to question the CAHPS Consortium and other experts and exchange ideas and practical solutions with your peers. Watch for a formal invitation this summer, and check the CAHPS-SUN Web site at <http://www.cahps-un.org/Home/Index.asp> for updated information.

ACAHPS

Ambulatory CAHPS (A-CAHPS) is a vision for the next generation of CAHPS surveys. The idea behind A-CAHPS is to provide users with a flexible, modular approach to assessing the quality of ambulatory care at different levels of the health care system while still retaining valuable aspects of the current CAHPS Health Plan Survey. Specifically, A-CAHPS will enable sponsors to ask consumers about a set of pertinent functions at the level of health plans,

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medical groups, sites of care, and/or individual clinicians within the same survey.

The CAHPS Consortium is currently developing a list of functions of health care plans and providers that users may want to assess. The following list represents the functional areas identified by the Consortium as of February 2004:

- Access (Getting Needed Care and Getting Care Quickly)
- How Well Doctors Communicate
- Office Staff Courtesy, Helpfulness and Respect
- Shared Decision-Making
- Coordination/Integration of Care
- Health Promotion and Education
- Customer Service

Depending on feedback from stakeholders and results of testing (including field tests), this list of functions may evolve over the next six to 12 months.

To choose functions that will be covered by the A-CAHPS instruments, the CAHPS Consortium uses the following criteria:

- They are important to reaching and maintaining a high level of quality of care
- They are important to consumers in selecting health care
- They are aspects of care for which consumers are the best or only judge.

The intent of this modular approach is to enable users to field questionnaires that meet their needs and are suitable for their markets, yet yield results that are comparable to those of CAHPS survey users in other markets. The NCBD will continue to provide a national

database for benchmarking and research purposes for all A-CAHPS modules and instruments.

Building on its original purpose as a tool for public reporting, A-CAHPS will provide new items that will support the use of these surveys for quality improvement measurement and interventions. The A-CAHPS Team is now involved in developing a set of items for each function that can be used to assess care at each of the four levels of the health care system. The first priority of the developmental work is to refine the health plan instruments, which will be field-tested in the summer of 2004, and develop instruments for assessing experiences at the level of individual clinicians.

To support the validity of this work and ensure that the A-CAHPS survey products meet the needs of all likely users, the developers of CAHPS are now sharing information about this initiative with key stakeholders and seeking their input into the development process. The SUN will hold a webcast on **Thursday, June 24th from 1 – 3 pm Eastern time**. Individuals who are interested in attending this free event should register through the SUN Website (<http://www.cahps-sun.org/Events/Announcement.asp>).

If you would like to learn more about this work, please contact the CAHPS Survey Users Network (SUN) at cahps1@westat.com. We can put you in touch with an appropriate Consortium member.

NCBD Web Site

Our updated NCBD Web site includes the 2004 submission materials and a “What’s New” section. Please visit us at <http://ncbd.cahps.org> to keep abreast of updates and new releases.